

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A better understanding of the present invention will be realized from the detailed description which follows, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 is block diagram of a multiplexer apparatus which can be configured into various different products using techniques according to the present invention;

FIGURE 2 is a block diagram of a system in which the apparatus of FIGURE 1 is used to implement a network element known as a terminal;

FIGURE 3 is a block diagram of a system having a Unidirectional Path Switched Ring (UPSR) configuration, in which the apparatus of FIGURE 1 is a UPSR network element;

FIGURE 4 is a block diagram of a system in which the apparatus of FIGURE 1 is used to implement a network element known as a linear add/drop multiplexer;

FIGURE 5 is a view similar to FIGURE 1, but identifying specific components which are used in each of several different sections thereof;

FIGURE 6 is a diagrammatic elevational front view of the apparatus of FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 7 is a flowchart showing a sequence of steps which embody one form of the present invention;

FIGURES 8A-8C is an example of a flowchart developed according to techniques which embody the present invention, and includes several separate figures that are collectively referred to herein as FIGURE 8; *KMV
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FIGURE 9 is chart showing an analysis relating to one class of components from the apparatus of FIGURE 1; and

FIGURE 10 is a chart showing a similar analysis relating to a different class of components from the apparatus of FIGURE 1.